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Amended claims

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8 June 2000

1. A coated chewing gum comprising a core of chewing gum and a coating comprising a coating material and one or more active substance(s), characterised in that the active substance(s) is/are added in solid form and is/are selected ^{group consisting of} among natural vegetable flavouring agents having a water content of less than 75% by weight, acids, and high potent sweeteners.

2. The coated chewing gum according to claim 1 wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is selected ^{from the group consisting of} among fruits and herbs.

3. The coated chewing gum according to claim 2 wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is selected ^{group consisting of} among coconut, grape fruit, orange, lime, lemon, mandarin, pineapple, strawberry, raspberry, mango, passion fruit, kiwi, apple, pear, peach, apricot, cherry, grapes, banana, cranberry, blueberry, black currant, red currant, gooseberry, and lingonberry thyme, basil, valerian, fennel, parsley, camomile, tarragon, lavender, dill, cumin, bergamot, sage, aloe vera, spearmint, peppermint, eucalyptus, and mixtures thereof.

4. The coated chewing gum according to claim 3 wherein the water content of the natural vegetable flavouring agent is less than 60%, preferable less than 40%, more preferred less than 30%, such as less than 25%.

5. The coated chewing gum according to claim 4 wherein the water content of the natural vegetable flavouring agent is less than 20% by weight, such as less than 15%, more preferred less than 10% such as between 1.5-7%, more preferred between 2-6%.

6. The coated chewing gum according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of claims 1-5~~ wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is freeze-dried.

7. The coated chewing gum according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of claims 1-6~~ wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is in the form of a powder, slices or pieces or combinations thereof.

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8. The coated chewing gum according to claim 7 wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is in a form where the particle size is less than 3mm, such as less than 2mm, more preferred less than 1mm, calculated as the longest dimension of the particle.

9. The coated chewing gum according to claim 7 wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent is in a form where the particle size is from 3µm to 2mm, such as from 4µm to 1mm.

10. The coated chewing gum according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of claims 1-9~~ wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent comprises seeds from a fruit ~~e.g.~~ from strawberry, blackberry and raspberry, and which seeds are substantially intact.

11. The coated chewing gum according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~ wherein the natural vegetable flavouring agent also provides the gum formulation with natural colour.

12. The coated chewing gum according to claim 1, characterised in that the natural vegetable flavour is selected ^{group consisting of} ~~among~~ peppermint, periwinkle, eucalyptus, spearmint, anethol, menthol, powdered anise, and fruit flavours such as orange, lemon, mango, pineapple, lime, strawberry, cherry, black currant, blueberry, raspberry, wild berry, cranberry, apple, pear, banana, prune, and plum flavour.

13. The coated chewing gum according to claim 1, characterised in that the acids are selected ^{group consisting of} ~~among~~ citric acid, malic acid, tartaric acid, lactic acid, and ascorbic acid.

14. The coated chewing gum according to claim 1, characterised in that the sweeteners are selected ^{group consisting of} ~~among~~ aspartame, acesulfame K, saccharin, cyclamate, neohesperidine, thaumatin, glycyrrhizin, and salts thereof, monellin, sucralose, and alitame.

15. The coated chewing gum according to claim 1, characterised in that the functional substances are selected ^{group consisting of} ~~among~~ vitamins, "cooling agents", flavour enhancers, and pharmaceuticals in the coating such as the vitamins A, B, C, D, and E, enzymes, nicotine, caffeine, acetylsalicylic acid, chlorhexidine, ~~(zinc compounds)~~, and antihistamines.

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16. The coated chewing gum according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ wherein the active substance(s) is/are in an encapsulated form.

17. The coated chewing gum according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ 16 wherein the encapsulated active substance is encapsulated in one or more material(s) selected among fatty substances, waxes, gelatine, gum arabic, starch, cellulose, cellulose derivatives, shellac, polyvinyl acetate, polyethylene, casein, zein, B cyclodextrine, silica, yeast cells, and a mixture of the above encapsulation materials, preferably a mixture of fatty substances and carnauba wax.

18. The coated chewing gum according to ~~any of claims 1-17~~, characterised in that the coating additionally comprises one or more liquid active substance(s).

19. The coated chewing gum according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ further comprising a flavour [is] selected among natural, naturally identical or synthetic flavours, and plant extracts.

20. The coated chewing gum according to claim 19, characterised in that the plant extracts are selected among extracts of liquorice, coffee, tea, herbs such as sage, thyme, basil, bergamot, balm, valerian, camomile, lavender, ~~also vera~~, and spices such as pepper, cinnamon, capsicum, paprika, tarragon, fennel, mustard, dill, caraway, parsley, and ~~tomato~~.

21. The coated chewing gum according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ further comprising a salt.

22. The coated chewing gum according to claim 21, characterised in that the salts are selected among sodium chloride, potassium chloride, ammonium chloride, sodium bicarbonate, and carbamide.

23. A method for the preparation of a coated chewing gum according to ~~any of claims 1-22~~, characterised in that it comprises the following steps:

1) preparation of a core of chewing gum ~~in a manner known per se~~.

2) preparation of a coating suspension, also ~~in a manner known per se~~,

3) application of the coating suspension onto the cores of chewing gum ~~in a manner known per se~~,

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- 4) Applying on the coating of one or more active substance(s) selected from 1-22 in solid form in one or more increment(s) after the application of the coating suspension, and optionally repeating step 3) and 4)
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- 5) optionally, application of one or more liquid active substance(s) in one or more increment(s) between the applications of the coating suspension,
- 6) optionally, finally application of a surface layer.
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24. The method according to claim 23, characterised in that the coating suspension comprises an aqueous solution of a sugar, a sugar alcohol, an artificial sweetener or mixtures thereof.
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25. The method according to claim 24, characterised in that the coating suspension comprises an aqueous solution of one or more constituent(s) selected among saccharose, dextrose, sorbitol, xylitol, tagatose, mannitol, maltitol, isomalt, aspartame, acesulfame K, saccharine, cyclamate, taline, and neohesperidine.
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26. The method according to ~~any of claims 23-25~~ ^{claim 23}, characterised in that the coating suspension is applied in approx. 2 to 90 increments, preferably in [approximately] 30-60 increments.
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27. The method according to ~~any of claims 23-25~~ ^{claim 23}, characterised in that the active substance(s) present in solid form is/are applied in 1 to 10 increment(s) between the dosages of the coating suspension, preferably 1-4 increment(s).
28. The use of one or more active substance(s) selected among natural vegetable flavour agents, high potent sweeteners and functional substances in solid form in the coating of a coated chewing gum to achieve a fast onset of the effect.
29. The use of one or more active substance(s) selected among natural flavour agents, acids, high potent sweeteners, and functional substances in solid form in the coating of a coated chewing gum to achieve a better stability of the active substance.
30. The use of one or more active substance(s) selected among natural vegetable flavour agents, acids, high potent sweeteners, and functional substances in solid

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form in the coating of a coated chewing gum to achieve an increased effect of the
active substance in all chewing phases.

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